1:Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1952
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412 pots. Fermented drinks are often stirred with a shoulder blade of the manatee, *peixe-boi*. For *mingau*, a sweetened gruel, there is always a little swizzle stick made of arrow cane with a small cross of sticks lashed transversely to the end of the shaft.

415 The Tukuna still use three types of "primitive" containers. One consists of the outer shell of the *sacupaia* nut in its original form. Another is made from the spatulate end of the frondstalk of the *anajá* palm, which has the shape of an oval basin with noticeably raised edges; nothing is done to this either, to prepare it for use. A third is made from the leaf sheath of the *açaky* palm,* which is folded into the shape of a small, flat, rectangular box, about a half meter long, the folds being secured with two small, wooden spits.

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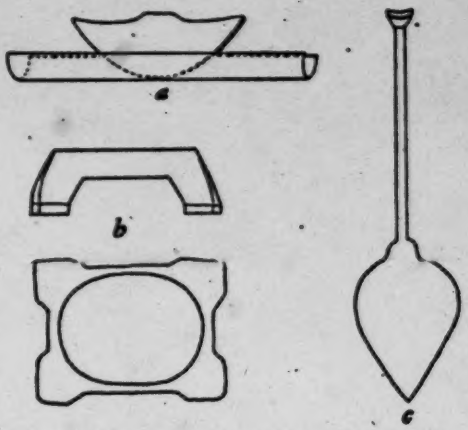


Fig. 4. Wooden objects. a. Quiricá or rocking board, × 1/10. b. Small bench, × 1/10. c. Paddle, × 1/10.

417 By the side of the kitchen fire one invariably sees a portable rack, *moquem*, for
252 drying meat, made of three poles, each 1.5 m. long, tied together at the upper ends so as to form a tripod (ko'ya-čik|ra', jaw of alligator), between the legs of which the grill is tied. Any meat or fish to be dried is placed on this grill, which is then set over the fire or, if this is occupied, any handy kindling is piled beneath the tripod. Only if there is a large quantity of game or fish is a fixed grill set up, in which case it rests upon four posts and two crossbeams (na:'/tam|°).

The spit is rarely used, and then only to roast bits of small game. In order to handle fish easily on the grill the Tukuna press it between two prongs of a flat strip of wood, something like a pair of pincers. The prongs are passed through the fish's mouth and gills, and the ends are tied together just forward of the tail. Frogs, toads, Coleoptera larvae, shrimp, and small fry are placed on the grill wrapped in leaves, forming small packages tied at both ends.

412 Contrary to what Tessmann says,* the Tukuna do not use the mortar, though it does appear in their legends as an object used by demons. For it the Tukuna sub-
[773] stitute a rocking-board (tau/ta'-činę°ę°; l.g., *quiricá*) of half-moon shape made

* *Euterpe edulis*; also, *assahy, palmito doce*. The heart of this palm is eaten.
* Tessmann, loc. cit.

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412 sumi). These sieves are identical with those of the Neobrazilians and are probably borrowed from them. The original type of Tukuna sieve is perhaps the round one found occasionally even today; it fits better in the mouths of the jars used in straining the pulp from which beverages are made, the original purpose of these sieves.

The paddle for stirring manioc flour in the oven is the same as that used by the [171] Neobrazilians—a small board attached to a long stick, if it is not just some old canoe paddle. For turning cassava (*mandioca*) cakes in the oven the Tukuna use a small board shaped like a segment of a circle, almost invariably a broken section [285] of an old canoe-paddle blade. Flour is kept in cylindrical openwork baskets woven [251] of uarumã in an open-mesh technique, lined with leaves that also seal the top, and tied by a plait of cipó. This is the common form also used by the Neobrazilians.

In the kitchen there are always a number of small four-legged benches, ȵu/ma'vɨ̃ 352 (fig. 4, *b*), rectangular or oval in shape, each carved entirely from a single piece of wood. Sometimes they are made in the form of a tortoise, *jabotí* (*Emys tabulata*) (pl. 9, *c*), and they are always made with some cunning. They are never more than [362] ten centimeters high. These benches are used exclusively by men while partaking of refreshments, whereas the women sit on the floor.

356 *Cleanliness.*—The house as well as the kitchen is usually clean, since both are swept out at least once daily with a broom made of the leaf ribs of small *tucumã* leaves left over from the fibers used in making thread. The Tukuna do not tolerate a stink in the house or in the kitchen. They immediately remove excreta of domestic [412] animals or of small children, including the soiled portion of the earth, with the [231] point of a short, broad blade.[1] This scrupulousness is the main reason why these Indians have a distaste for raising chickens and never keep pigs.

[136] Neither dog fleas nor chiggers (*Pulex penetrans; bicho de pé*) become annoying in Tukuna houses, but cockroaches, crickets, and tracuá ants are most disagreeable. These last, above all, immediately swarm over any food not on the grill while the fire is burning and invade baskets and trunks with irritating persistency. The Indian chief Calixto daueru'kɨ fought this plague in Igarapézinho by thrusting thick reeds, open at one end, into the house thatch. In a short time the insects would build their nests in these reeds and, when the reeds were filled, he would shake them out over the fire and again insert the reeds in the thatch.

## Communication between Settlements

487 Formerly, communication between isolated settlements was mainly by land, since the Tukuna, in contrast to the Omágua, were foot Indians, not canoe men. All the igarapés (tributaries of the left bank of the Solimões) inhabited by these Indians were connected by trails; likewise the different houses along a particular igarapé. Castelnau mentions these paths,[2] which connected the Tukuna habitations of the interior from Caldeirão (Belém) to Tabatinga and Loreto. With the development of navigation many of these trails were abandoned, although some are used even today.

501 Originally, the Tukuna practiced little navigation, being isolated in their jungle 177 centers on solid ground by the Omágua, their superiors in warfare. They had only

[1] *Terçado*, lit., a short, broad sword; probably the machete or *facão*.—Trans.
[2] Castelnau, p. 50.

1:Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1952
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small craft made from the trunks of *paxiuba barriguda*.[19] In contact with the Omágua, hostile at first but ultimately peaceful, they exchanged their admittedly primitive craft for their neighbors' ubá—a canoe completely hollowed out from a cedar trunk, with the gunwales not expanded by fire.

Finally, they learned from the Neobrazilians the use of the casco (pl. 10, *f*), a canoe hollowed out from a tree trunk, carved both inside and out, expanded by fire, and finally strengthened by interior braces. Today the Tukuna are excellent canoewrights for craft of this type, their cascos being duly appreciated by the Neobrazilians. They have become a canoe people and sometimes pass entire weeks on trips in this craft.

At the same time, though they have neglected their original trails, they have opened up countless paths and passages of all kinds through the flooded jungles in the marginal region along the Solimões and the igarapés, where they fish and go from one house to another in their canoes. Since these passages are often low and narrow, the Indians use only mats to protect their gear from the rains, not the *punacarica* or semicylindrical awning common to the entire Amazonian region. Rafts are never used for transport.

The casco is propelled almost exclusively by paddling, only rarely by poling. The paddle (fig. 4, *c*), another article the Tukuna sell in quantities to the Neobrazilians, has a round blade with a point about the length of the radius of the central part or longer. The shaft ends in a small, slightly concave crosspiece. The Tukuna say that originally the points of the paddles were shorter and less sharp than now. According to Tessmann, the blade was large and round. The blade, the crosspiece, and a small part of the adjacent shaft are invariably stained with cumatê paint, only the central part of the shaft remaining white. There are no other decorations on the paddle except those in imitation of the Neobrazilians'.

[19] According to J. S. Decker, Flora Brasileira, this species is *Iriartea exorrhiza*; *I. ventricosa* is known as *castiçal*.—Trans.

2: Nimuendaju E-5 (1941-1942) 1948
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Each residence has a proper name, given by the owner at a special feast. Houses are usually clean. 552 356

**Household furniture.**—Hammocks are made by a netlike technique of tucum thread of different colors; they are now used only for daytime resting. Clothes are kept in large baskets. 513 286

On the struts and rafters of the house one can often see remnants of the paraphernalia of feasts: masks, turury fringes, drums, and dance sticks. Ears of maize hang from the frame of the house or are piled in the loft. 352

The *Tucuna* never build a fire or eat in the dwelling. The kitchen is always a small separate house. Fire was formerly produced by drilling a horizontal piece of wood, which was placed over two cross pieces. There is, however, a tradition that even in old times they made fire by striking two stones. [343] 372

Fire fans are made exclusively of large bird wings. [412]

The *Tucuna* have plenty of small four-legged stools, either rectangular or oval, made from a single piece of wood, sometimes elaborately carved in the shape of a chelonian or batrachian. 352 532

## TRANSPORTATION

Formerly, the *Tucuna* traveled largely on land, although on the small streams they used small primitive canoes made of paxiuba palm. From the *Omagua* they learned to make "ubá" type dugout canoes, and from the Neo-Brazilians to make "casco" type dugouts which were widened by heating them over a fire. These are sometimes provided with round shields (rodellas) and gunwales. *Tucuna* canoes are so well made that civilized people seek them. Paddles have crutch handles and a round blade with a large point. The blade and the crosspiece on the end of the handle, but not the handle, are invariably painted black. 501 [177]

## DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

Formerly, both sexes trimmed their hair slightly over the brows, and used a comb made of twigs held between two parallel sticks. 302

Both sexes used to pierce their ear lobes; only women do so now. Through the hole they usually wore little plates of white wood; on feast days they inserted small rods with feathers on the front end, from which a small metal plate hung. Women's plates were triangular, men's moon-shaped. Long ago they pierced the nasal septum, through which they had put a little rod of *Gynerium*. They also used to tattoo the face, which at one time may have indicated clans. There are still recollections of circumcision of girls, but not of men, as described by Father Noronha in 1768. 304 301 [174] [114]

633333—47—48

4: Marcoy T-5 (ca. 1865) 1875 SQ20 Tucuna SQ20



canoe grazed the topmost branches, we passed suddenly from the white waters of the Amazon to the black waters of the Atacoari. Having reached the place where this river bifurcates, we took the left branch, and landed in a little creek, where a few houses were visible. Brazilian soldiers, of the kind who poniard their chiefs under pretext of tyranny, had taken refuge in this spot, and lived conjugally with Ticuna women who had escaped from some mission. These runaway warriors, who may be frequently met with on the canals and igarapés of the Amazon, where the sentence of a court-martial cannot reach them, have sometimes received us in a most hospitable manner, and caused us to wonder at the peaceful tableau presented by their home life. All cultivate a few yucca-roots and bananas, hunt and fish to supply their table, traffic with the river traders in sarsaparilla and chocolate, which they collect in the woods, and from this trifling commerce draw a little money with which to purchase cotton goods wherewith to clothe themselves, and ornaments to bedeck their wives. Exempt from all troubles and anxiety, without ambition or unsatisfied dreams of any kind, these philosophical deserters, under the ban of society, but received with open arms by nature, pass their days happily with the companions of their choice and the little, brown, and hairy marmots which Heaven has been pleased to send them.

The business which brought my young Portuguese to the dwelling of these planters was connected with an order for a load of sarsaparilla which he had received from the Barra do Rio Negro, and which the Atacoari merchant had promised to deliver at the end of the month. The transaction being concluded to the satisfaction of the two parties, and sealed with a dram of rum taken from a common glass, we supped and slept beneath the roof of the Brazilian soldier. The next morning, instead of descending the Amazon, we continued to ascend the course of the Atacoari.

To the square houses of the soldiers soon succeeded the round huts of the Ticunas. These natives, who, as I was informed, inhabited only the banks of the principal river, dwell also, in point of fact, on the banks of the Yacanga and Yanayaquina, two tributaries of the right and left banks respectively.

The first Ticunas we came across made a very bad impression on me. We had just started on our way. It was seven o'clock, and the sun was rising: the more elevated parts of the landscape were already brilliantly illuminated; below all was enveloped in a soft fog; the birds chattered whilst pluming their wet feathers; the flowers, vivified by the freshness of the morning, commenced to exhale their various perfumes; drops of dew trickled slowly from the leaves and fell one by one into the river. Leaning against the side of the canoe, I was idly dreaming, hearing without understanding and gazing without seeing, when, from behind some brushwood which hid from us a bend in the river, issued, or rather shot out, a little canoe manned by two Ticunas, a man and a woman: the man rowed, the woman steered with the paddle; in the centre of their vessel, a mere nut-shell, there was visible a bunch of bananas and edible roots, half-covered with some large cane-leaves. The brilliant green of the fresh leaves, still glistening with dew, contrasted with the blue and vermilion of a tame ara squatting on them. As they were rowing towards us we were able to examine them at our leisure.

4: Marcoy T-5 (ca. 1865) 1875 SQ20 Tucuna SQ20



The colour of these natives recalled that of old mahogany. A thick rough mane of hair covered their shoulders. The man was decorated on each cheek with tattoo-marks of a deep blue, produced with the juice of the *Pseudo-Añil indigofera*, the design of which somewhat resembled the Chinese letters on a tea-chest. He wore round his neck a necklace made of three or four rows of monkeys' teeth mounted on an osier framework; a brassart of woven cotton, ornamented with a bunch of yellow feathers and surmounted with a crest composed of the long feathers of the ara, was fastened just below the shoulder of each arm; bracelets of a similar material, but without the *pompon* or crest, encircled his legs above the ankles; and a peculiar girdle round his loins completed his attire. In his hand he carried a lance of palm-wood, with a notched point. The woman had neither the hieroglyphic marks on her face nor

CANOE OF THE TICUNA INDIANS ON THE RIVER AYACOARI.

the crested bracelets on her arm. She wore a necklace of red glass beads, acquired in one of her husband's transactions with the Brazilians. A band of woven cotton adorned the lower part of her legs, and a belt of the same material, none too wide, encircled her loins.

This little group, dimly seen in the faint light of the quebrada, and standing out in relief against the rich back-ground of vegetation, through which the blue sky was here and there visible, presented a charming subject for a sketch, of which I proceeded to take advantage. Having stopped the canoe, my companion amused the two Ticunas while I set to work to paint them. Puzzled by my occupation as much as by the intentness with which I regarded them, the couple exchanged some observations in an idiom with which I was unacquainted, and in the utterance of which they appeared to use their throat rather than their tongue. The gutturals of Hebrew, the double consonants of the Quichua tongue, the G, the Jotas and the X of the Castilian, are sounds of the softest melody compared with the vocal gurgling of these Ticunas,